ART BY
RAN

STORY BY
SHIKI MIZUCHI

AND ON THE LEFT IS THE HOLY KNIGHTS' MUSEUM.
ON THE RIGHT HERE, YOU CAN SEE THE CATHEDRAL OF SAINT ROSA MARIA.
AMAZING...! THE CAPITAL CITY IS JUST INCREDIBLE!!

Chapter XXVI
The City's Evening Magic

Chapter XXVI
The City's Evening Magic

WHAT'S THAT BRONZE STATUE OF?
IT DEPICTS PART OF THE INVESTITURE CEREMONY!
THAT'S LIONEL III, KING OF CHEVRON...
ANOINTING PALADIN DURHAM-- THE VERY FIRST PALADIN!
WOW ...!
YOU CAN REALLY FEEL THE WEIGHT OF HISTORY HERE!
SLOW DOWN! IF YOU KEEP GETTING OVER-EXCITED AND DARTING AROUND, YOU'LL GET LOST!
OH, PLEASE! YOU'RE NOT EXCITED ENOUGH!
WE'RE IN THE CAPITAL CITY! I, FOR ONE, AM GOING TO ENJOY EVERY SINGLE SECOND OF IT! SO THERE!!

ART
RAN

STORY
SHIKI MIZUCHI

CHARACTER DESIGN
KOHADA SHIMESABA

SEVEN SEAS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

DRAGONAR ACADEMY VOLUME 6

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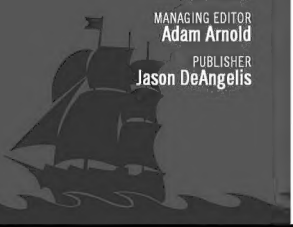

DRAGONAR ACADEMY VOL. 6
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Edited by MEDIA FACTORY.
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ISBN: 978-1-626921-29-0

Printed in Canada

First Printing: May 2015

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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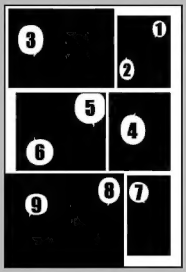
READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from ***right to left***, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



Dragonar Academy
Cast of Characters

Ash Blake

A first-year Senios (upperclassman) at Ansullivan Dragonar Academy. He has the gift of riding any dragon. He's partnered with the young dragon Eco.

Eco

Despite her appearance, Eco is a dragon--and Ash's Steed! She's young and inexperienced, but was still able to craft an Ark for him.

Sylvia Lautreamont

The fourth princess of the Knightdom of Lautreamont. Known as the Ice Blue Princess, she is partnered to the Maestro dragon Lancelot.

Rebecca Randall

A third-year student at Ansullivan Dragonar Academy and president of the student council. She's the school's most gifted Dragonar, and rides the Maestro dragon Cúchulainn. She's called the Scarlet Empress.

Jessica Valentine

A first-year Senios at Ansullivan Dragonar Academy and a childhood friend of Rebecca's. Since discovering Ash's identity as the Silver Knight, she's been trying everything she can think of to get close enough to him to bear his offspring.

Navi

A mysterious entity who appears in the Dragon's Workshop, a shared space constructed by the Holy Dragons long ago. Navi helps Eco build an Ark, and has been appearing in Ash's dreams.

Oswald Lautreamont

The king of Lautreamont Knightdom. He holds the title of Paladin, but the truth is, he's never bonded with a dragon. He's a doting parent, blinded by his love for his children.

Milgauss

A soldier from the Zepharos Empire, Milgauss attacked Ash during the Dragonar Festival of Aries. His true identity and motivations are shrouded in mystery.

Anya

A girl who works alongside Milgauss. As an operative for the Empire's intelligence service, she is currently undercover in the knightdom.

DRAGONAR ACADEMY

THE STORY SO FAR

Ansullivan Dragonar Academy: a school for boys and girls who've made pacts with dragons! Ash Blake is a student at the academy, but he's an embarrassment to the school--even though he has a Star Mark (the symbol of his pact), his dragon has yet to be born.

While Ash was participating in the Dragonar Festival of Aries, he was attacked and nearly killed by a man who seemed to be an imperial soldier. With Ash moments away from death, his Steed finally awakens. However, unlike all the other students' Steeds, Ash's dragon, who he names Eco, has the shape of a young human girl.

"YOU ARE NOT MY KEEPER! I AM YOUR KEEPER!!!"

SMILE

Ash and Eco try to settle into daily life together, but their efforts are thwarted when the town is attacked by a Necromancia! Ash, armored by the Ark Eco created for him and wielding the holy blade Aix-les-Bains, is able to counter the Necromancia's assault and protect Ansullivan!

FWOOM!

GAWAIN !!!
OMPLETE.
Thanks to Eco and Navi's efforts, Ash is given a new Ark to fight Milgauss, but the masked man proves to be too strong. Ash winds up in a tight spot, but between his own strong will and his friends' strength, he's able to force Milgauss to retreat. In the process, the bond between Lucca and Gawain is reestablished.
Ash and his friends leave the academy's invitational training camp and head to Willingham Mausoleum to save Lucca's dragon, Gawain. But upon arriving, they find themselves face to face with Milgauss-- and he has dire plans for them and the other students at the camp! Sylvia faces off against Nuaza, a maestro dragon who has been transformed into a Necromancia, and Ash challenges Milgauss to a face-to-face battle. And back at the camp, Rebecca and the other remaining students have an attacking force of over 300 Necromancias to deal with!
After returning to the academy, Ash and Eco are summoned by Sylvia's father-- the Paladin Oswald, king of the knightdom! As they and Sylvia reach the capital city, Fontaine, and have an audience with Oswald, we see Milgauss and a mysterious young man spying on the trio from afar...
BELLEEE
GULP...

星刻の竜騎士

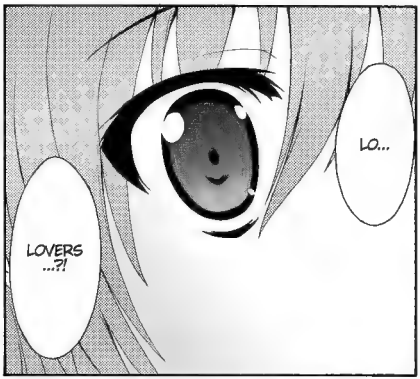
MUSEUM.
CHURCH.
OPERA HOUSE.
WAIT, ECO!
WE CAN'T KEEP UP WITH YOU.
LET'S REST FOR A BIT.
S-SORRY!
!
I'M... SO TIRED...
ASH...
DON'T BE SILLY! WE STILL HAVE TO GO TO THE SHOPPING DISTRICT!!
WHERE'D PRIM GET TO?
I'LL JUST WAIT HERE UNTIL YOU TWO GET BACK.
Youch!
Let's go!
SEE-THROUGH!!

GUESS THAT'S NOT SURPRISING IN THE CAPITAL'S SHOPPING DISTRICT, THOUGH.
WOW, IT LOOKS LIKE YOU CAN BUY ANYTHING HERE!
SIZZLE
HMM?
ECO?
THAT MAKES NO SENSE!
AND I'M ALMOST OUT OF MONEY!
IMAGINE IF I'D GONE HOME WITHOUT EATING A CAPITAL CITY CRÊPE!!!
HOW COULD I LET THIS HAPPEN?!
HOW CAN YOU POSSIBLY BE THINKING OF EATING? YOU JUST HAD A TON OF FOOD AT THE CAFÉ!
HEH HEH!♪ I'LL THINK ABOUT IT!
SIGH... FINE, BUT THIS IS IT, OKAY?
BUSTLE
BUSTLE

I HEAR IT'S ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR DATE SPOTS IN THE SHOPPING DISTRICT.
HEY, DO YOU KNOW IF THIS PLACE IS GOOD?
!
A WHOLE LOT OF COUPLES AROUND HERE.
HUHH...
CLANCE
THERE SURE ARE...
THIS IS JUST EMBARRASSING!!
OH, COME ON! SERIOUSLY?!
AND...
WHY ARE YOU GIVING THEM ALL THAT ENVIOUS LOOK?
ASH!
!
WHY'RE THOSE PEOPLE ALL ACTING SO SNUGGLY?

WELL?
WHAT'S THE REASON?

LIKE A HUNGRY BASILISK!
HISSS!
OR MAYBE A CAGED PIG.
TH-THAT'S JUST HARSH!
Y-YOU THINK I LOOK ENVIOUS?!


LO...
LOVERS ...?!

WELL....
I GUESS..
BECAUSE THEY'RE ALL WITH LOVERS. SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

I...
I SEE...

YOU'RE THE ONLY GIRL FOR ME.
YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU, RIGHT?
ANOTHER COUPLE ...?
AND THE LINE'S SO DAMN LONG... WOW, THIS SUCKS.
?!
HUH?
NUDGE
.....!
DON'T LOOK!
WHAT IS IT, ECO?
HMM? HER FACE IS ALL RED.
.....
REACH

I DON'T MIND!
I- I MEAN... I CAN HOLD YOUR HAND. IF YOU WANT.

I GUESS SHE DOESN'T LIKE FEELING LEFT OUT. SHE'S GOT THAT COMPETITIVE STREAK...
ECO ...?
.....!
I MEAN, WE'RE A DRAGON AND A HUMAN.
.....
YEAH, THAT'S PROBABLY IT.
WE PROBABLY LOOK LIKE JUST ANOTHER COUPLE.
BUT TO EVERYONE AROUND US...

MMMM!! THIS SMELLS SOOOO GOOD!!
THE DEFINING SCENT OF THE CAPITAL!
HA HA! "THE SCENT OF THE CAPITAL," HUH?
WHY DIDN'T YOU GET SOMETHING TOO?
'CAUSE I COULDN'T.
EVERYTHING COSTS WAY MORE HERE THAN AT HOME.
ONE CREPE IS 300 GLORINS! IT'S CRAZY!
H-HEY! THAT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE BLAMING ME!
GLARE
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT!
HMPH!
WHAT ...?

WELL, WE'RE VISITING THE CAPITAL AND ALL...
SO IT'S NOT FAIR IF I HAVE FUN AND YOU DON'T.
YOU CAN HAVE ONE BITE, OKAY...?
HUH? ARE YOU SURE?
!
OH, WOW! THIS IS REALLY GOOD!!
REALLY ?!
YOU SHOULD ENJOY YOURSELF TOO, OKAY?
HERE!
TRY IT, ECO!
OKAY.

IT'S LIKE THE COMBINATION OF THE CAPITAL AND THE SUNSET ARE CASTING A SPELL ON HER.
ECO'S UNBELIEVABLY CUTE TODAY-- EVEN MORE THAN USUAL.
I'D NEED A DOZEN STOMACHS TO HOLD ALL THE CRÊPES I WANT!!
EEEE! HOW CAN THIS CRÊPE BE REAL?!

HEY, LOOK!
AN AIRSHIP!
BA!GOOM!
THAT EMBLEM BELONGS TO...

THEY'RE UNDOUBTEDLY HERE FOR THE ELYSIUM.
SPECIFICALLY, THAT'S THE FAMILY CREST OF HOUSE VIDERHALISEN.
!

THE ZEPHAROS EMPIRE!
IT'S AN IMPERIAL SHIP!!

IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR THE FEAST! ♪
OH! SURE. WE'RE READY TO HEAD BACK.

HUH ...?
I FEEL LIKE WE'RE FORGETTING SOMETHING...
Meat! Yay!

NOOOO ---!
WHY ARE THEY SO LAAATE ...?!
WHAT THEY FORGOT.
WOOF!

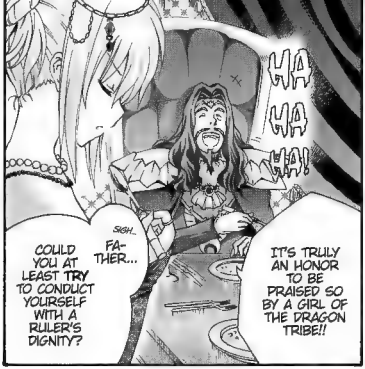
COSETTE ?!
HEE HEE! I'M HERE TO FETCH YOU.

DUM DE DUM~! ♪
MEAT~! ♡
SOME-HOW MADE IT BACK.
SO...
THERE IS GOING TO BE SOME DELICIOUS MEAT, ISN'T THERE?
HAHP
HAHP
ECO...
I'M SORRY FOR MAKING YOU PLAY ALONG WITH MY FATHER'S SELFISH WHIMS.
WH-WHAT ?!
Meat like me?!
I BELIEVE THEY'RE SERVING SOME CHEVRON BEEF THAT'S AS DELECTABLE AS YOU, ECO! ♪

BLUSH
PRIN-
CESS...!
WHAT'S
WRONG?
UH,
NOTH-
ING...
YOU
JUST...
LOOK
REALLY
BEAUTI-
FUL.
!
HEY
!!
HOW
COME YOU
DIDN'T SAY
ANYTHING
ABOUT
HOW I
LOOK?!
!!
BLUSH

POUT
Y-YOU LOOK BEAUTIFUL TOO, ECO!
OH, LIKE YOU SAYING THAT NOW COUNTS FOR ANYTHING?!
But it's true...
NOW, NOW, ASH.
IT'S TIME!

SO!
AW, MAN. I CAN'T EVEN TASTE THIS.
WHAT A LONG TABLE...
HA HA HA! NOT TO WORRY.
ACK! ECO!
THE SOUP'S NOT BAD...
DRIP
CLAP CLAP
BRING EACH DISH OUT AS SOON AS IT'S READY.
IT SEEMS THAT THE LADY ISN'T IN FAVOR OF THE FOOD ARRIVING IN COURSES.
BUT WHEN'S THE MEAT COMING?


HA HA HA!
IT'S TRULY AN HONOR TO BE PRAISED SO BY A GIRL OF THE DRAGON TRIBE!!
SIGH...
FA-THER...
COULD YOU AT LEAST TRY TO CONDUCT YOURSELF WITH A RULER'S DIGNITY?

HEH!
I EXPECTED THE PALADIN TO BE STUFFY AND SELF-IMPORTANT, BUT YOU'RE ALL RIGHT, AREN'T YOU?

IT'S ONLY NATURAL TO ACCORD THE HIGHEST COURTESY TO ECO!
HA HA HA!
SIGH...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WITHOUT THE DRAGON TRIBE'S FAVOR, OUR CONTINENT WOULD HAVE FALLEN TO THE EMPIRE LONG AGO.

HEARING THE DETAILS OF YOUR EXPLOITS FIRSTHAND FILLS ME WITH JOY.
.....

AHH, I SEE.
YOUR ACCOMPLISH-MENTS ARE TRULY MAGNIFICENT!

SHARING A MEAL TOGETHER.
MY FATHER, THE KING, AND A COMMONER STUDENT...
BUT...THIS REALLY IS ALL QUITE UNUSUAL.
PEEK
I WONDER...
WHEN DID HE GROW UP SO MUCH?
.....

AND FOR YOUR SERVICE, I, OSWALD, AM TREMENDOUSLY GRATEFUL.
WITHOUT YOUR EFFORTS, OUR KNIGHTDOM WOULD HAVE SUFFERED GREAT TRAGEDIES.
NOW, ALLOW ME TO THANK YOU AGAIN.
FATHER ...?
!
I BESTOW UPON YOU THE TITLE OF DRAGONAR!!
AND SO, ASH...
P-PLEASE LIFT YOUR HEAD! I DIDN'T DO ANY-THING---
URK ---!
CLATTER
AS PALADIN, I MUST REWARD YOU APPROPRI-ATELY!!
NO!

CLATTER
WHAT--?!
M-M-ME?! A DRAG-ONAR?!
.....!
B-BUT A DRAGONAR IS A MAESTRO'S RIDER...!
AND I-I'M NOT!!
OH? LET ME ASK YOU THIS.
HUH?
CAN YOU SAY WITH ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY THAT...
ECO IS NOT A MAESTRO?
W... WELL, I... UH...
SO MANY MYSTERIES SURROUND HER! CAN ANYONE DENY THE POSSIBILITY?

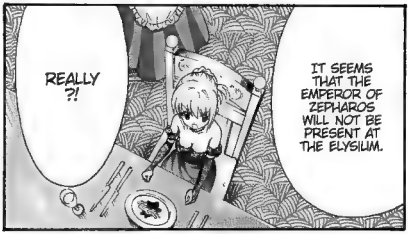
AS YOU WISH.
FRIEDA, BRING THE ITEM.
AND WHILE THERE MAY NOT BE A PRECEDENT FOR THIS...
TAKE THIS.
THIS POCKET WATCH IS THE SIGN OF YOUR NEW POSITION.
I HAVE DECIDED YOU'LL BE A DRAGONAR FROM THIS DAY FORTH, AND A DRAGONAR YOU SHALL BE!
IN THE NAME OF THE PALADIN OSWALD, IN THIS PLACE...
I APPOINT YOU, ASH BLAKE, TO THE RANK OF DRAGONAR.

AS THE PALACE IS CURRENTLY A HIVE OF ACTIVITY WHILE PREPARING FOR THE ELYSIUM...
WE'LL PERFORM THE OFFICIAL INVESTITURE CEREMONY AT A LATER DATE.

I...
I HUMBLY ACCEPT THIS HONOR, SIRE!!

.....

Y-YES !!


REALLY ?!
IT SEEMS THAT THE EMPEROR OF ZEPHAROS WILL NOT BE PRESENT AT THE ELYSIUM.

NOW, WE SHOULD TURN TO ANOTHER SUBJECT...
AND DISCUSS THE EMPIRE.

?
BUT THEN...
WHO'S BEEN SENT AS THE EMPIRE'S REPRE-SENTATIVE?
YES.
HE CLAIMS HE'S TOO OLD TO MAKE THE TRIP PERSONALLY.
HOWEVER, I'M NOT SURE HOW TO TAKE HIS FAILLIRE TO AT LEAST SEND A PRINCE OR PRINCESS IN HIS PLACE.
THAT AIRSHIP FROM EARLIER ...!
HOUSE VIDERHALISEN ARE MILITARY NOBILITY WHO HAVE SERVED AS COUNTS OF THE VANDENHAAR BORDERS FOR GENERATIONS.
THE HEAD OF HOUSE VIDERHALISEN HAS BEEN SENT IN HIS STEAD.
THAT'S THE VERY REASON WE HOLD THE ELYSIUM--- AND THE MASQUERADE BALL.
NOW, NOW. CALM YOURSELF.
THERE'S NO DOUBT THE EMPIRE STILL WANTS TO RULE THE WHOLE CONTINENT ---!
SENDING A MERE NOBLEMAN IN PLACE OF THE EMPEROR?! THE ARROGANCE!
WHAM

HA HA HA!
IT'S AN EVENT DESIGNED TO FOSTER GOODWILL BETWEEN NATIONS. YOU MIGHT CALL IT THE PRELIMINARY SKIRMISH BEFORE THE ELYSIUM BEGINS.
ANYONE CAN ATTEND, SO LONG AS THEY'RE AFFILIATED IN SOME WAY WITH THEIR PARTY LEADERS.

MASQUERADE BALL?
WHAT'S THAT? IS IT YUMMY?

THE MASK IS SUCH A SIMPLE THING, YET IT ALLOWS SUCH FREEDOM FROM RANK AND CEREMONY!
SINCE EVERYONE'S FACE IS CONCEALED BY A MASK, PEOPLE CAN HAVE AN ENJOYABLE TIME TOGETHER WITHOUT WORRYING ABOUT THE BARRIERS BETWEEN NATIONS.

.....
SO YOU PLAN TO GO, PRINCESS?

YOU AND ECO ARE AFFILIATED WITH ME...
SO YOU UNQUESTIONABLY HAVE THE RIGHT TO ATTEND.

I KNOW!! WHY DON'T YOU TWO ATTEND AS WELL?
UH... BUT...!

I SUPPOSE...
IT SEEMS I AM.
WELL, IF THE PRINCESS IS ATTENDING, THEN...
SO THAT'S DECIDED!
NOW, ONE LAST THING, IF YOU DON'T MIND.
THERE'S SOMETHING WHOLLY UNRELATED THAT I MUST ASK YOU ABOUT.
HM?
O-OF COURSE.
REGARDING SYLVIE...

SHIVER...
YOU TWO HAVEN'T ENTERED INTO ANY SORT OF IMPROPER RELATIONSHIP, HAVE YOU?
E-ER... AH...!
VERONICA EXPRESSED SOME CONCERNS ON THAT FRONT AS WELL.
FATHER !!
WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU SAYING?!
GLARE
SILENCE !!

BE AWARE THAT, I, OSWALD...
WILL PERSONALLY PUNISH YOU!
MY GRATITUDE TO YOU HAS NO BEARING ON THIS SUBJECT.
HEED MY WORDS, ASH...
RUMMMBLE
SHOULD YOU LAY A HAND ON MY BELOVED SYLVIE...
THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NOTHING LIKE THAT BETWEEN ME AND THE PRINCESS!!
I SWEAR!! I SWEAR!!
UWAHH!
SWEAR IT TO ME, ASH!!
WH-WHAT ?!!

I BELIEVE YOU.
AND I HOPE THAT YOU'LL CONTINUE TO DO GOOD WORK IN THE FUTURE!
trembles
trembles
NOW, SHALL WE CALL IT A NIGHT?
.....
YOU IDIOT...

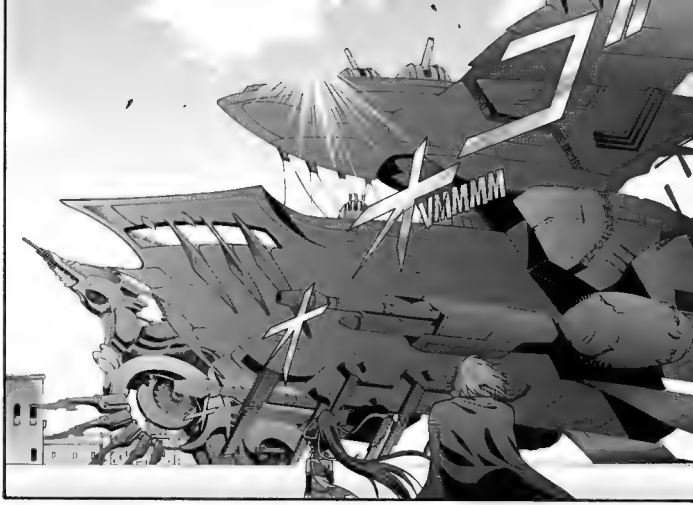
DRAGONAR
ACADEMY

星刻の竜騎士

Chapter XXVII
Conspiracy Aboard the Beowulf

MILGAUSS!!
I HAVE ARRIVED AND AM AT YOUR SERVICE.
ALL RIGHT.
COME WITH ME.
DOWN A BACK ALLEY...
AND INTO AN UNDER-GROUND TUNNEL.

HE DOES HAVE SOME CONNECTION TO THE KNIGHTDOM ...?
IS IT POSSIBLE THAT...
HE IGNORED THE GUARDS OUTSIDE--AS IF THEY'RE IRRELEVANT.
IT'S LIKE HE KNOWS THIS PLACE INTIMATELY.
THIS IS AN ESCAPE ROUTE FOR THE ROYAL FAMILY'S USE. IT'S TOO SECRET FOR GUARDS.
WHY AREN'T THERE ANY GUARDS PATROLLING THIS PASSAGEWAY?
!
WE'RE GOING UP.


VMMMM

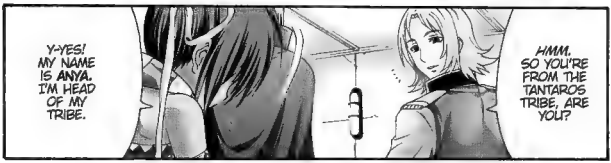
OH!!
I WAS JUST STARTING TO GROW IMPATIENT, MY MIL-GAUSS!!

LET'S GO.

THAT'S THE IMPERIAL AIRSHIP-- THE BEOWULF!
SO THIS IS THE AIRSHIP MOORING, HMM...?

YOU MUST BE TIRED FROM EVADING ALL THOSE GUARDS, YES?
COME ON IN.
IS THAT A NORMAL GREETING AMONG PEOPLE IN THE EMPIRE?
Ri-ing
Ri-ing
JOLT
HUG
I'M SO GLAD YOU CAME!!
BUT FIRST, LET'S DEAL WITH YOUR ARM.
AND HE'S MILGAUSS'S MENTOR!
!
SO THIS MUST BE KLAUS, COUNT OF THE VANDERHAAR BORDER.
HE'S THE HEAD OF HOUSE VIDERHAUSEN, AND, NUMBERS AMONG THE EMPIRE'S MOST POWERFUL CITIZENS...

AN ARM !!
!!

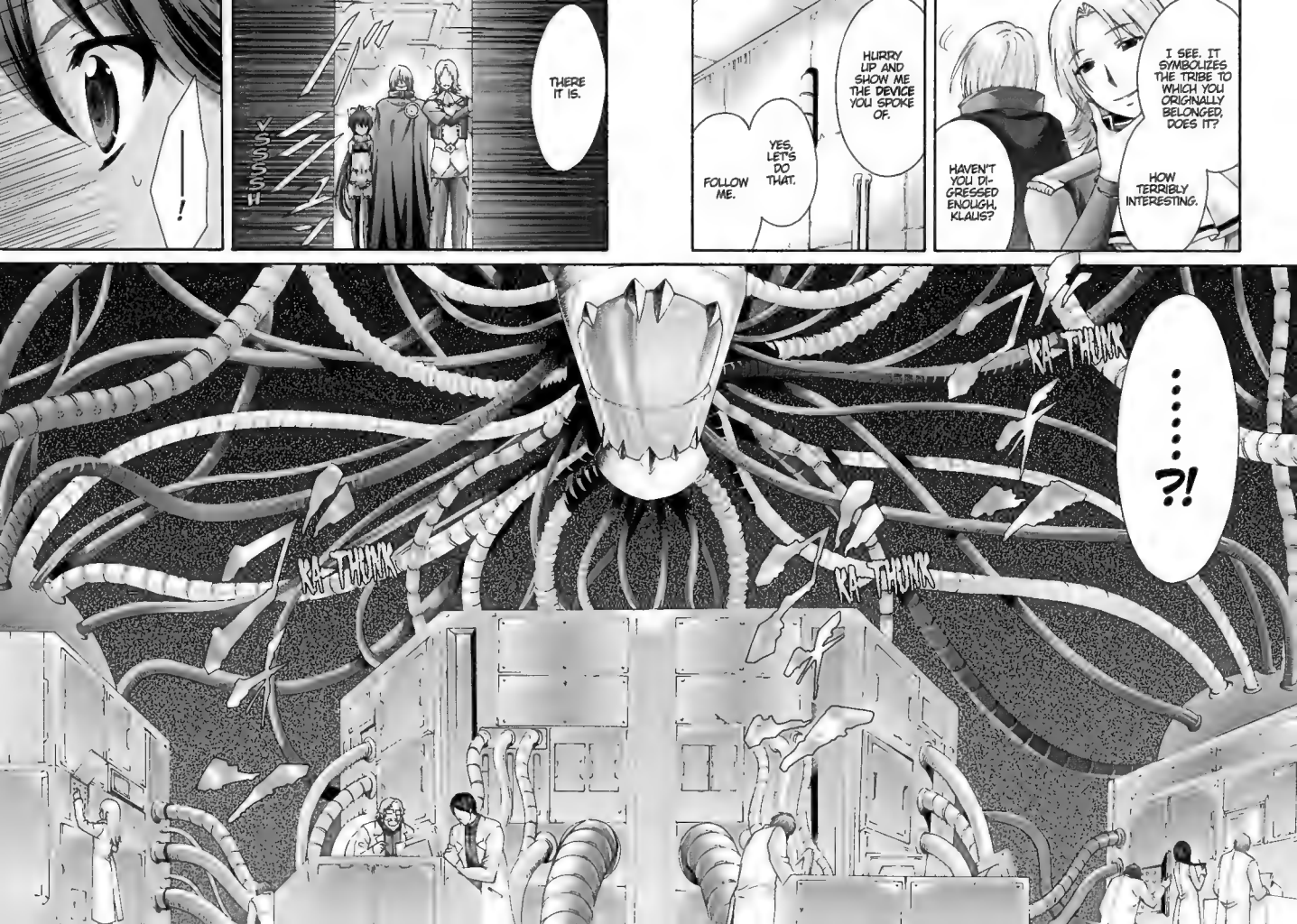

Y-YES! MY NAME IS ANYA. I'M HEAD OF MY TRIBE.
HMM. SO YOU'RE FROM THE TANTAROS TRIBE, ARE YOU?

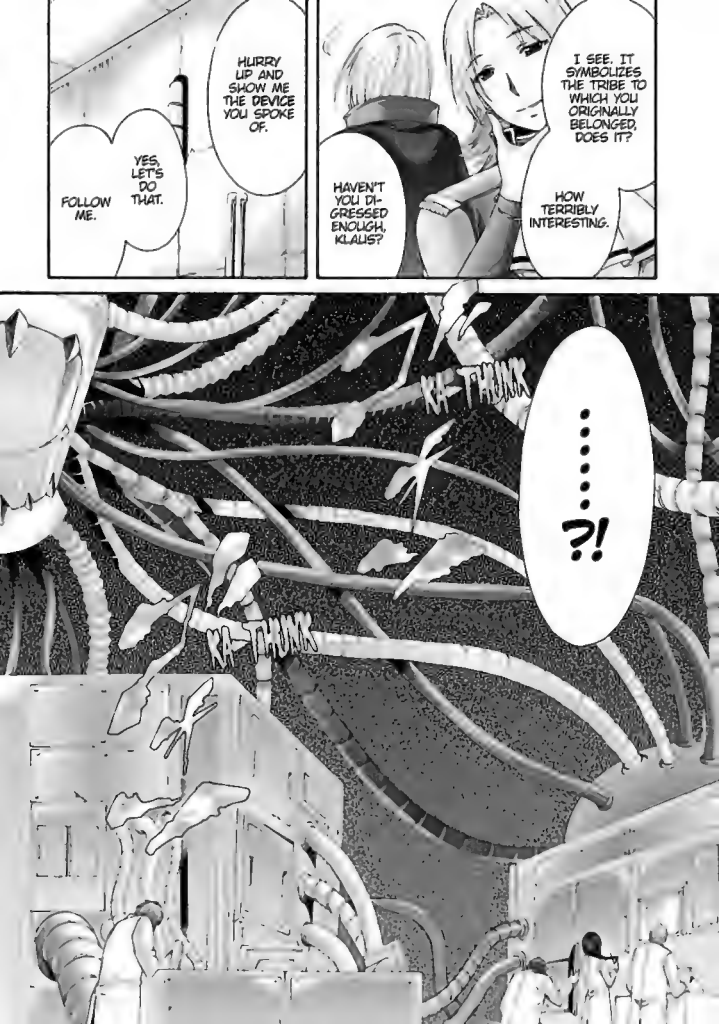
DON'T DWELL ON THE PAST, KLAUS.
I REMEMBER OUR FIRST MEETING LIKE IT WAS YESTERDAY.
CLICK
HA HA! NOW, NOW.

WELL, ANYA, THIS ARTIFICIAL ARM USES THE VERY LATEST TECHNOLOGY. NATURALLY IT'S A SURPRISE TO YOU.
ITS DEVELOPMENT COST AS MUCH AS A BRAND-NEW TANK!
FWIP
SO YOU CAN SEE JUST HOW HIGHLY I VALUE HIM.

STRANGE TO THINK IT'S BEEN OVER TEN YEARS SINCE THEN.

TEN YEARS SINCE A YOUNG MAN ARRIVED IN MY DOMAIN, STRIPPED OF HIS NAME, STATUS, AND HONOR-- AND HIS LEFT ARM.
HE'D BROKEN A GREAT TABOO IN HIS NATIVE LAND, SO HIS BODY WAS RAVAGED BY A CURSE.
.....
A... CURSE ...?
I WAS SO ENCHANTED BY HIS BEALITY THAT I TOOK HIM IN.
FLUTTER
THAT'S ENOUGH.
HEH! VERY WELL.
I'VE A WEAKNESS FOR BEALITIFUL THINGS, YOU SEE.
AHHH~! LIKE THAT SCARF OF YOURS. THE STITCHING IS UNUSUAL, AND THE EFFECT IS EXQUISITE.
OH...! THIS?
IN THE MOUNTAIN REGIONS, IT'S CUSTOMARY FOR TRIBES TO EXCHANGE CHILDREN IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH PEACE.
I WAS GIVEN THIS ON THE DAY I WAS PRESENTED TO MY NEW TRIBE.


!
YSSSSH
THERE IT IS.
FOLLOW ME.
YES, LET'S DO THAT.
HURRY UP AND SHOW ME THE DEVICE YOU SPOKE OF.
HAVEN'T YOU DIGRESSED ENOUGH, KLAUS?
HOW TERRIBLY INTERESTING.
I SEE. IT SYMBOLIZES THE TRIBE TO WHICH YOU ORIGINALLY BELONGED, DOES IT?
KA-THUNK
KA-THUNK
KA-THUNK
.....?!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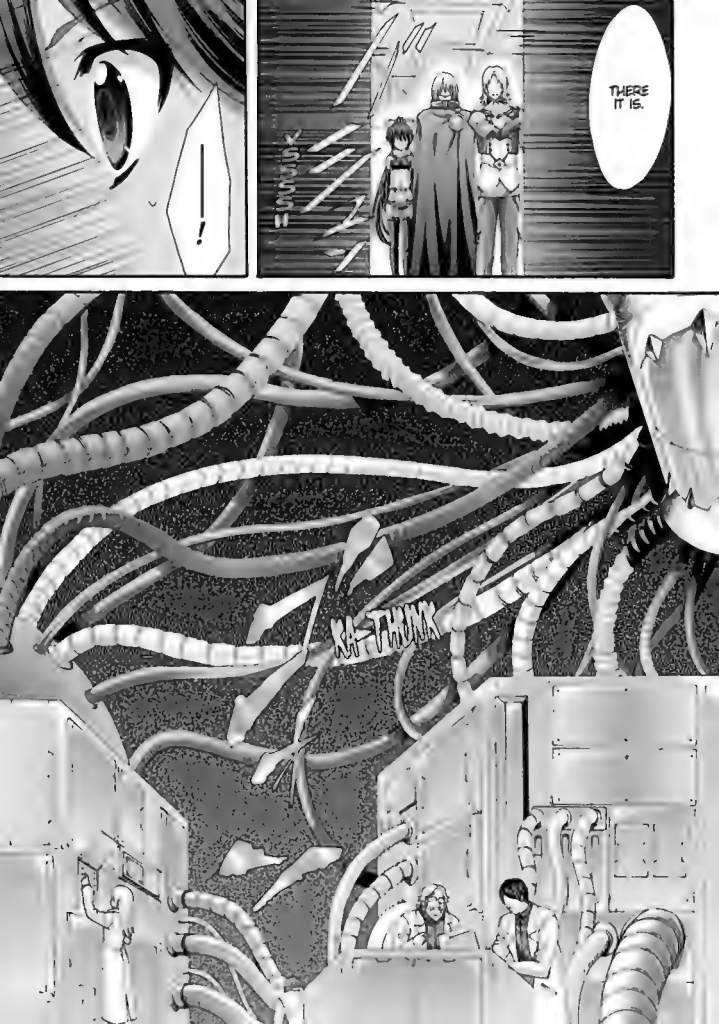
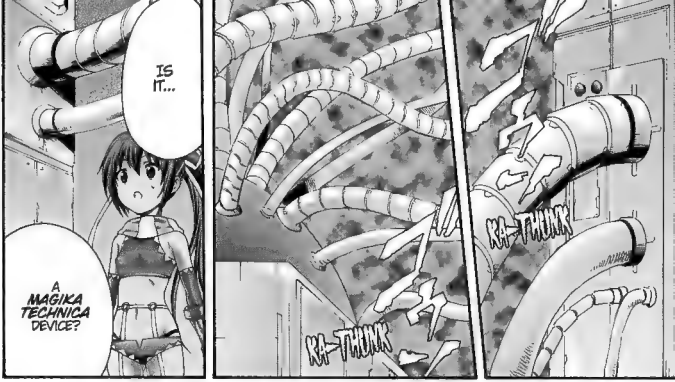
HOW TERRIBLY INTERESTING.
HAVEN'T YOU DIGRESSED ENOUGH, KLAUS?
HURRY UP AND SHOW ME THE DEVICE YOU SPOKE OF.
YES, LET'S DO THAT.
FOLLOW ME.
KA-THUMP
KA-THUMP
.....?!


!
SSSS


IS IT...
A MAGIKA TECHNICA DEVICE?
KA-THUNK
KA-THUNK

VERY PERCEPTIVE!
IT WORKS SIMILARLY TO TYRFING, THE SWORD WHICH CONTROLS NECROMANCIA.

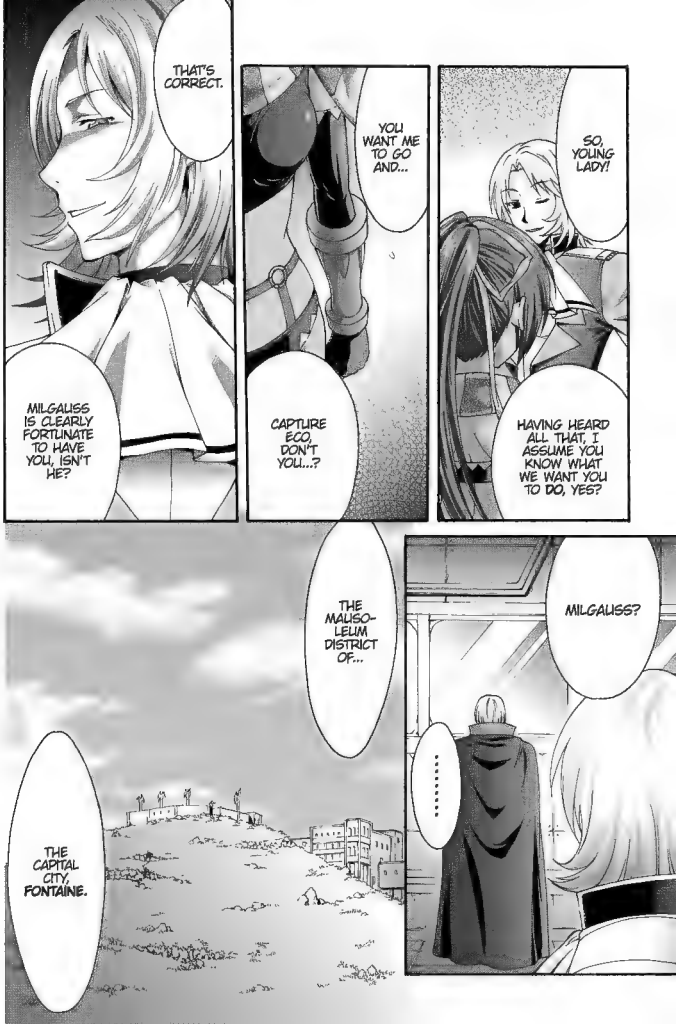
OH! HELLO, LORD KLAUS!
HELLO, PROFESSOR HOFFMAN. TELL ME, HOW ARE THINGS PROGRESSING?
AND IS THAT A CAPSULE ...?
IT ALMOST LOOKS LIKE SOME SORT OF TORTURE APPARATUS.

THE DEVICE IS ALMOST COMPLETELY ASSEMBLED, AND WE'RE RUNNING OUR FINAL CHECKS ON IT.
SINCE WE'RE USING THE MILLENNIUM TO POWER IT, IT WILL STILL BE SOME TIME BEFORE IT'S FULLY OPERATIONAL.
BUT IT SHOULD BE READY BY TOMORROW MORNING. ONCE WE HAVE THE PROPER SPECIMEN...
WE'LL HANDLE THAT ACQUISITION FOR YOU.
AHHH, LOOK HOW LOVELY IT IS.
THE TECHNOLOGY LEFT BEHIND BY THE OLD KINGDOM'S CIVILIZATION IS TRULY MAGNIFICENT.
WE'VE DECIDED TO NAME IT YGGDRASIL. WHAT DO YOU THINK?
I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE NAME. ALL THAT MATTERS IS THAT IT'S USEABLE.
HOW VERY LIKE YOU.
I GUARANTEE IT WILL WORK ONCE FINISHED.
AS TO WHETHER IT WILL GIVE THE RESULTS YOU'RE HOPING FOR, WELL... LET'S SAY I HAVE MY DOUBTS.
IT'S A GAMBLE.

?!
BUT WE'LL SEE SOON ENOUGH IF WE CAN USE IT TO FORCE THE YOUNG DRAGON ECO TO AWAKEN, AS YOU HOPE.
TO TAKE ECO AND...
WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?!
ARE THEY REALLY PLANNING ...
PUT HER INTO THAT HORRIFYING CHAMBER?!

FOR HIM, TO BE SO FIXATED ON HER...
WHAT CAN MILGAUSS BE PLANNING?
TRUE, SHE IS A DRAGON...
BUT, IT'S AWFUL TO ENVISION SUCH AN INNOCENT CHILD IN THIS CREEPY DEVICE.
AND FOR HIM TO EMBARK ON SUCH A GRAND SCHEME THAT IT EVEN INVOLVES THE ELYSIUM...
HE MUST BELIEVE THERE'S TREMENDOUS VALUE IN ECO--BUT WHAT?!

KLAUS, YOU NEEDN'T WORRY ABOUT SUCH THINGS.
JUST KEEP HAVING FAITH IN ME.
IF YOU DO, YOU'LL GAIN THE POWER OF THE DRAGONS--AND YOU'LL SURELY BE THE NEXT EMPEROR.
.....


SO, YOUNG LADY!
HAVING HEARD ALL THAT, I ASSUME YOU KNOW WHAT WE WANT YOU TO DO, YES?
YOU WANT ME TO GO AND...
CAPTURE ECO, DON'T YOU...?
THAT'S CORRECT.
MILGALISS IS CLEARLY FORTUNATE TO HAVE YOU, ISN'T HE?
MILGALISS?
.....
THE MALISO-LEUM DISTRICT OF...
THE CAPITAL CITY, FONTAINE.

HAAH!
MOR-
DRED!!
MORDRED...

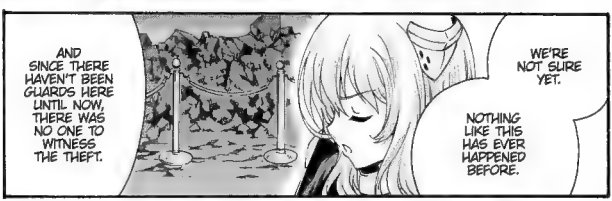
GRACIOUS ME!
THAT WAS A SUDDEN AWAKENING, YOUR HIGHNESS.
C-COSETTE.
GOOD MORNING.
BUT CALLING OUT THE NAME OF ANOTHER GENTLEMAN, DESPITE YOUR DEEP LOVE FOR ASH...
SORROW!!
I NEVER WOULD HAVE THOUGHT IT OF YOU!
CUT THAT OUT! MORDRED IS A DRAGON'S NAME!
I'M JESTING WITH YOU, PRINCESS.
BUT I CAN'T HELP NOTICING THAT YOU DIDN'T DENY YOUR "DEEP LOVE FOR ASH."
URK!
THERE WAS SO MUCH WRONG WITH WHAT YOU SAID...
THAT I HARDLY KNEW WHERE TO BEGIN!

THIS... THIS "MORDRED"...
WERE YOU...
REFERRING TO PRINCE JULIUS'S STEED...?
YES.
AHHH, DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN THE NECROMANCIA ATTACKED ANSULLIVAN?
SORRY ABOUT THIS...!
SLAP
THE STORIES SAY THAT THAT WAS THE BATTLE WHEN ASH SO BRAVELY ENCOURAGED YOU AND LIRGED YOU ON...!
SI-LENCE!
I DREAMED ABOUT BOTH MORDRED AND MY BROTHER.
I FELT LIKE I WAS SO CLOSE TO FIGURING OUT A SENSE OF DÉJÀ VU I HAD RECENTLY...
THAT'S RIGHT-- I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THERE WAS A FAINT ECHO OF MORDRED...
THE DRAGON THAT MY BROTHER PERSONALLY SLEW...!

THERE'S SOMEWHERE I NEED TO GO BEFORE BREAKFAST!!
CO-SETTE!
BUT IF WHAT I FELT WAS REAL, THEN THIS IS VERY SERIOUS!
I DON'T HAVE ANY DEFINITE PROOF...
STAND!
THE DRAGON TRIBE'S MAUSOLEUM DISTRICT.
YOU MAY NOT PASS WITHOLIT PERMIS-SION!!
WHO GOES THERE ?!
CLANK
AS I EXPECTED, THE MAUSO-LEUM HAS A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ATMOSPHERE THAN THE REST OF THE CITY.
Y-YOUR HIGHNESS?! PLEASE FORGIVE MY IMPER-TINENCE!
I AM SYLVIA LAUTREA-MONT.

I'M HERE TO SEE MORDRED'S MAUSOLE-UM.
STRANGE-- THERE NEVER USED TO BE GUARDS POSTED HERE.
O-OF COURSE, HIGHNESS! USE THE STAIRS JUST AHEAD...!
.....!
VERONI-CA!
SYLVIA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
SIR GLENN!!
AND AVDOCHA ...?!
I-I COULD ASK THE SAME OF ALL OF YOU, SISTER! WHY ARE YOU HERE?!

WHAT? WHEN DID THAT HAPPEN?!
LEAN
MORDRED'S ASHES HAVE BEEN STOLEN.


AND SINCE THERE HAVEN'T BEEN GUARDS HERE UNTIL NOW, THERE WAS NO ONE TO WITNESS THE THEFT.
WE'RE NOT SURE YET.
NOTHING LIKE THIS HAS EVER HAPPENED BEFORE.

OUR ENEMY IS CLEARLY USING THE REMAINS OF FALLEN DRAGONS AS A WEAPON AGAINST US.
……!!
THEN WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO CHECK IN ON MORDRED'S REMAINS?
USE YOUR HEAD. THE EVENTS AT WILLINGHAM MALISOLEUM!

AND SURE ENOUGH, DRAGON REMAINS HAVE VANISHED FROM ALL OF THEM.
HEY --!
DON'T IGNORE ME!
.....
AND THAT'S WHERE WE COME IN! WE AND OUR FOREIGNERS' SQUAD HAVE BEEN INVESTIGATING EVERY MAUSOLEUM IN THE NATION!!
DON'T ACT LIKE A CHILD.
DON'T PUSH DOWN ON ME! STOP!! HOW CAN I GROW TALLER IF YOU DO THAT?!
IT'S CLEAR THAT OUR FOE IS SEVERAL STEPS AHEAD OF US. WE HAVE TO BE VIGILANT AT ALL TIMES.
OH, AND SYLVIA... I HEARD ABOUT YOUR BATTLE AT WILLINGHAM MAUSOLEUM.
I'M TOLD YOU AND LANCELOT ACQUITTED YOURSELVES ADMIRABLY AGAINST A MAESTRO NECROMANCIA.
AS YOUR ELDER SISTER, I'M PROUD TO HEAR IT.

N-NOTHING...
YOU SURPRISED ME, THAT'S ALL.
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
.....
THANK YOU VERY MUCH...
SISTER!!
.....
WHAT--?!
YOU FELT VESTIGES OF MORDRED IN THE NEGROMANCIA THAT ATTACKED ANSULLIVAN?!
OH!
AND THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO TELL YOU ABOUT.

YES. AND WHAT'S MORE...
ABOUT THE MAN CALLED "MILGAUSS"...
WHO I MENTIONED IN MY REPORT...
I HAVE NOTHING TO BASE THIS ON BUT INTUITION, BUT I BELIEVE HE IS ACTUALLY OUR BROTHER JULIUS.
!!
TH-THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!!
LUNGE
THERE'S NO WAY HE'S STILL ALIVE, NEVER MIND WORKING FOR THE IMPERIAL ARMY!!
HOW COULD YOU EVEN SUGGEST SUCH A THING...?!
GLENN, STAND DOWN!
OF... OF COURSE.
SIR GLENN...
CLANK

AT ANY RATE, NO ONE ELSE CAN KNOW!
EVEN A RUMOR LIKE THIS WOULD DO GREAT DAMAGE TO OUR FAMILY NAME-- THE NAME OF THE KNIGHTDOM ITSELF!

BUT I MUST ADMIT, IT IS HARD TO FATHOM SUCH A WILD NOTION.
WHAT, DID HE RISE FROM THE ASHES ALONG-SIDE THOSE DRAGONS?

OUR INVESTI-GATION INTO THE MATTER WILL BE TOP SECRET, LITTLE SISTER.
I UNDER-STAND.

WH--?!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!
AH, BUT WHEN WILL YOU NEXT HAVE A CHANCE TO DANCE WITH ASH?
I'M SAYING IT'S A MAS-QUERADE.

MMM. THE MAS-QUERADE BALL...
I DON'T FEEL QUITE RIGHT ABOUT GOING.
YOUR HIGH-NESS... YOU MUST CHOOSE WHAT TO WEAR THIS EVENING.

THE PERFECT TIME TO FORGET THE DIFFERENCES IN YOUR SOCIAL STATUS AND LET THE MUSIC SWEEP YOU AWAY.
AND AFTER YOU'VE DANCED TO YOUR HEARTS' CONTENT, YOU TWO CAN SLIP OUT TO THE MOONLIT TERRACE...
WHERE HE'LL TAKE YOU INTO HIS EMBRACE FOR A PASSIONATE KISS...!

.....

Y-YOU'RE CRAZY--!!
FLAIL
FLAIL
YOU'VE BEEN READING TOO MANY PULP ROMANCES!!

GYAAAAAAH!!!
ASH--?!

WHAT HAPPENED --?!
BANG
WHAT'S WRONG ?!

UH...

EEEEP!
HEY! WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING?!
OKAY, SERIOUSLY, I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!
THEN WHY ARE THE MAID'S CLOTHES ALL OVER THE FLOOR, HUH?!
THEY WERE LIKE THAT WHEN I WOKE UP, I SWEAR!
MMMM...
COSETTE... SNUGGLES...
SQUEEZE

RUMMBLE
HUH ?!
ACK! PRIM!!
PLEASE, LET GO!!

WOULD-BE KNIGHTS SHOULDN'T HAVE SEXUAL RELATIONS SO CASUALLY...
CRACK
POP
SO THAT'S THE KIND OF THING YOU'RE GETTING UP TO WHILE YOUR MISTRESS IS SLEEPING IN THE NEXT BED, HUH...?
MUTTER.
MUTTER

HEE HEE! GOODNESS, YOUR HIGHNESS.
AAAAAHHH!!
THUD
THUD
KA-POW
YOU'RE ALL FULL OF THE VIGOR OF YOUTH, HMM? ♡

DRAGONAR
ACADEMY

星刻の竜騎士

Chapter XXVIII
In the Palace's Abandoned Garden

I'M SOOOO SORRY!
IT'S ALL MY FAULT! I WAS HALF-ASLEEP, AND WENT INTO THE WRONG ROOM!
NAH, IT'S FINE.
WE WORKED THROUGH THE MISUN-DERSTAND-ING...
OH, YES! ASH AND ECO, I HAVE TO HELP THE PRINCESS DRESS.
SO YOU'LL BE ATTENDED BY---
HOLD IT!
WHAAA?!
DU-DUN
ARE YOU ABOUT TO SAY THAT KLUTZY MAID IS GONNA GET HIS READY FOR THE BALL?!
THAT'S RIGHT! ♡
TRUE, MY BIG SISTER ISN'T TERRIBLY BRIGHT OR STRONG, AND SHE IS A KLUTZ...
FRANKLY, SHE'S A BIT LIKE A PAIR OF GIANT AMBULATORY BREASTS.
WAAAAH!
YOU'RE SO MEAN!!

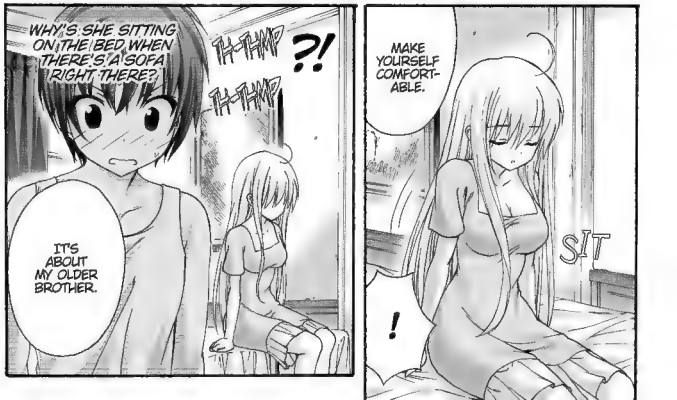
RIGHT THIS WAY, ECO!
W-WAIT! ARE YOU SURE THIS'LL WORK OUT?!

BRIGHTEN
BUT THAT SAID, SHE HAS AN INCREDIBLE EYE FOR BEAUTY!
YES, EXACTLY!
I'M VERY GOOD AT THAT!!

MM-HMM.
THE TAILOR? DID YOU HAVE IT ALTERED?
GAH! THAT JUST SLIPPED OUT!!
MY DRESSES HAVE ALL GOTTEN A LITTLE TIGHT IN THE CHEST--

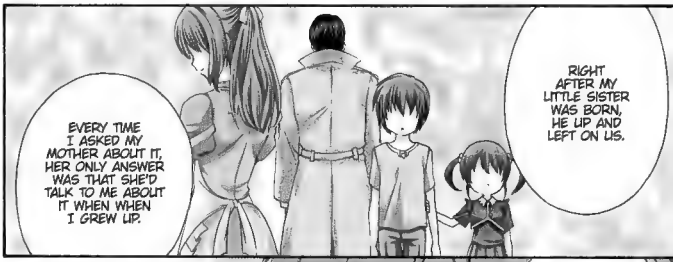
SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE, COSETTE...
BUT I NEED YOU TO PICK UP MY DRESS FROM THE TAILOR.
OF COURSE, YOUR HIGH-NESS.

HUH? HERE? SURE.
JUST THE TWO OF US?
W-WELL, ANYWAY...
WOULD YOU MIND... CHATTING WITH ME UNTIL SHE GETS BACK ...?


WHY'S SHE SITTING ON THE BED WHEN THERE'S A SOFA RIGHT THERE?
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
?!
IT'S ABOUT MY OLDER BROTHER.
MAKE YOURSELF COMFORT-ABLE.
SIT
!

I THINK... HE REALLY MIGHT STILL BE ALIVE.
!
SO YOU THINK MILGALISS REALLY IS--?!
THAT'S WHAT I BELIEVE.
BUT WASN'T PRINCE JULIUS EXECUTED ...?
YOU'VE MET MY FATHER NOW. CAN YOU HONESTLY IMAGINE HIM EXECUTING HIS OWN SON?
I'M HAPPY THAT MY BROTHER'S ALIVE...
BUT WHY THE EMPIRE ...?
I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE HE'D TURN DRAGONS INTO THINGS LIKE THAT. THEY'RE THE SYMBOL OF OUR NATION!

SIT
WHAT ...?
I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER WHAT MY FATHER LOOKED LIKE.
YOU KNOW...


EVERY TIME I ASKED MY MOTHER ABOUT IT, HER ONLY ANSWER WAS THAT SHE'D TALK TO ME ABOUT IT WHEN WHEN I GREW UP.
RIGHT AFTER MY LITTLE SISTER WAS BORN, HE UP AND LEFT ON US.

ASH...
AND I THINK YOU'RE LIKE ME THAT WAY, PRINCESS.
ESPECIALLY IF THERE WAS SOME *REASON* HE HAD TO GO.
BUT SOMEDAY I WANT TO FIND HIM FOR MYSELF, AND HAVE A CONVERSATION.

I FEEL A LITTLE BETTER NOW.
UM.... THANK YOU.
IT WON'T BE EASY, BUT I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT.
YOU'RE SAYING I SHOULD THINK THE SAME WAY, AREN'T YOU?
SO...
?!
GRAB
NH ...!!
FLASH

OH!
RMBL
RMBL
RMBL
CRAP! I GUESS SHE'S MAD AT ME AGAIN.
.....!!
SHOVE
ACK ?!

UH... PRINCESS ...?
YOUR HIGHNESS, I'M READY TO HELP YOU DRESS NOW.
KA-CHUNK
TH-THMP
!
SHE'S DEPRESSED ABOUT HER BROTHER, RIGHT NOW?!
STOP IT, IDIOT! DON'T GET ALL DIS-TRACTED!
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
.....!

TP
TP
TP
ER...
OKAY...

LEAP
OH! A-ALL RIGHT!
SEE YOU LATER, ASH!

.....

RUMBLE RMBL RMBL
ECO AND PRIM...
SURE ARE TAKING THEIR SWEET TIME.

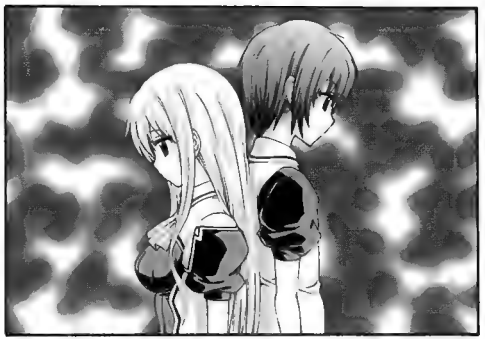
MUSH

BUT IT'S A BALL! EVERY GIRL THERE WILL BE IN HER VERY FINEST, TRYING TO STAND OUT!
ARE YOU SURE?
I THINK GRATE-A PEW OF THEM LOOKED BEAUTIFUL ON YOU.
HMM... THEY'RE ALL OKAY, BUT THERE'S NOTHING SPECIAL HERE.
IT'D BE COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE FOR A PROUD DAUGHTER OF THE DRAGON TRIBE TO BE OVERSHADOWED BY SOME DULL, DENSE HUMAN!
ESPECIALLY IF IT WERE THAT SYLVIA.
HMM...
YOU'RE CERTAINLY FIXATED ON HER, ECO!
IS THAT BECAUSE OF HOW STRONGLY YOU FEEL ABOUT ASH?

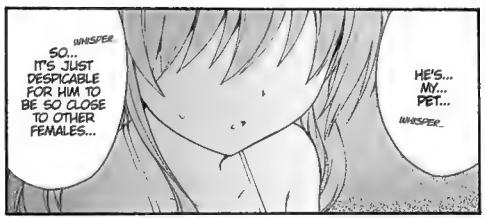
LAST NIGHT AT THE FEAST, HE AND THE PRINCESS SEEMED TO BE GETTING ALONG SO WELL...
AND I THOUGHT, PERHAPS, I NOTICED YOU FEELING A TAD JEALOUS, AS HIS STEED.
IT WAS ALL SO CHARMING!
YOU SEE? ♡

WH-WHY WOULD I CARE ABOUT AN IDIOT LIKE HIM?!
AND I DO NOT "FEEL STRONGLY!" YOU'RE UTTERLY MISTAKEN!
WHY, BECAUSE YOU'RE HIS STEED, OF COURSE! ♡

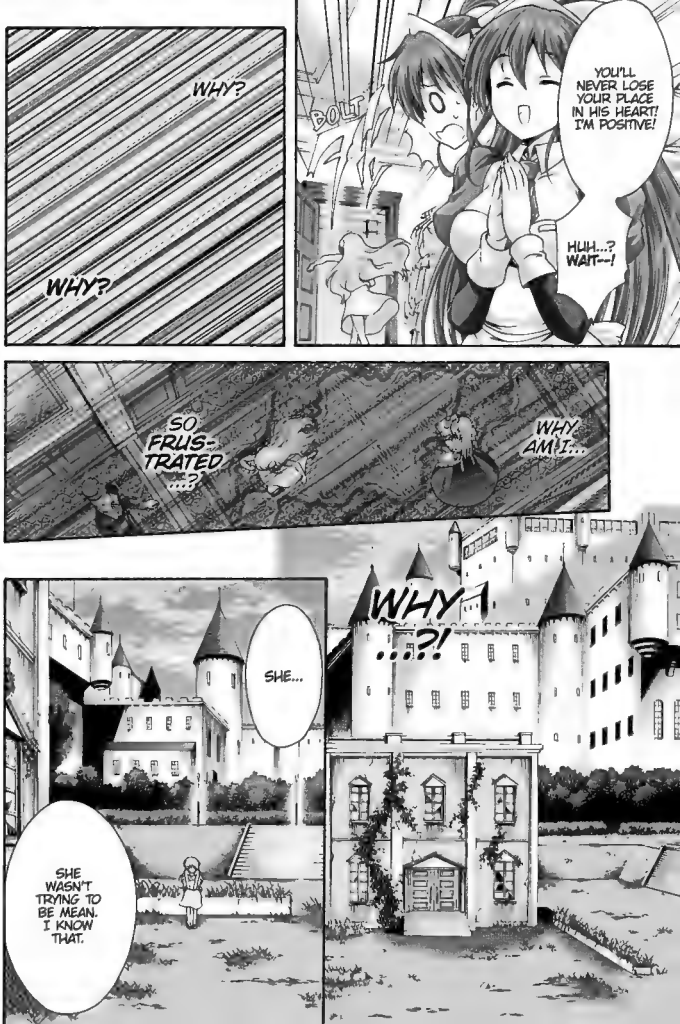
.....!!



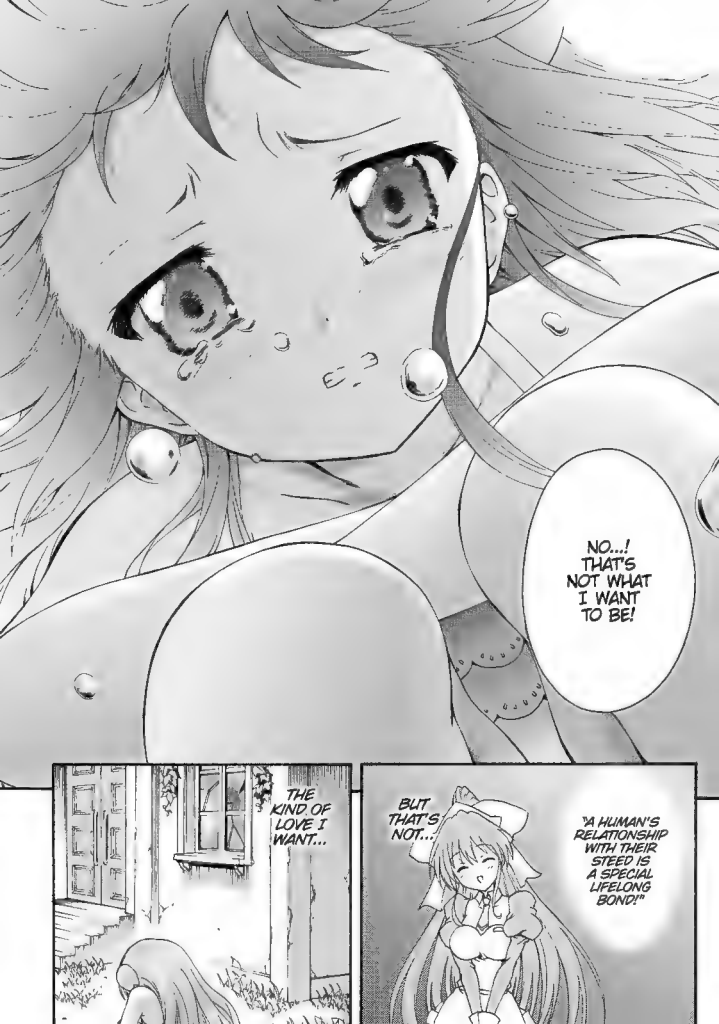
STIR


SO... IT'S JUST DESPICABLE FOR HIM TO BE SO CLOSE TO OTHER FEMALES...
WHISPER
HE'S... MY... PET...
WHISPER

HUH? "PET" ...?
PUMF
OH, I SEE! YOU'RE WORRIED IT COULD HURT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM?
NOT TO WORRY, ECO! DESPITE HOW YOU LOOK, YOU'RE STILL A DRAGON!
AND A HUMAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR STEED IS A SPECIAL LIFE-LONG BOND!
SO EVEN IF ASH FALLS IN LOVE WITH A GIRL SOMEDAY...
AND THEY GET MARRIED...
AND HAVE AN ADORABLE BABY TOGETHER...


WHY?
WHY?
BOLT
YOU'LL NEVER LOSE YOUR PLACE IN HIS HEART! I'M POSITIVE!
HUH...? WAIT—!
SO FRUS-TRATED ...?
WHY AM I...
WHY ..?!
SHE...
SHE WASN'T TRYING TO BE MEAN. I KNOW THAT.

ECO!!
WHAT WOULD MY PLACE BE...?
BUT IF SHE'S RIGHT AND SOMEDAY HE HAS A HAPPY LIFE WITH SOMEONE...
WHAT WILL BECOME OF ME THEN...?
HERE, YOU GO! EAT AS MUCH AS YOU LIKE!
THANK YOU, ASH!
A PET DRAGON...?!!
CLANK


NO...! THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANT TO BE!
"A HUMAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR STEED IS A SPECIAL LIFELONG BOND!"
BUT THAT'S NOT...
THE KIND OF LOVE I WANT...

I PLANNED TO DISGUISE MYSELF AS A SERVANT AND INFILTRATE THE PALACE.
I WAS PREPARED TO FACE ANY MANNER OF DANGER TO COMPLETE MY MISSION, BUT...
I CERTAINLY WASN'T EXPECTING MY QUARRY TO JUST WANDER OUT ALONE AND DELIVER HERSELF TO ME!
THERE'S ECO!
WHAT'S SHE DOING OUT THERE...?
.....
CLICK
I HAVE TO SEIZE THE MOMENT!
ALL RIGHT!

WHERE ARE YOU!?
ECO !!
ECO ...!
WHAM
PRIM ...?
?!
LUNGE
WITH ME, ALL OF YOU!!

YOU FOUR, RESTRAIN THE DRAGON!!
THUD
THEY DIDN'T HAVE ANYONE BUT AN ORDINARY MAID GUARDING HER, DESPITE HOW IMPORTANT SHE IS? HOW... ANTICLIMACTIC.
SLUMP
HMPH!
BY NOW, THEY'VE HAD TIME TO TAKE CARE OF ECO.
EVEN DISGUISED AS SERVANTS, WE'RE STILL A GROUP OF RUFFIANS, AND... MAYBE ONE CHILD...
WHMP
HEY!!
EXPLAIN WHAT'S GOING ON! RIGHT NOW!

SHE TOOK DOWN THREE MEN THAT QUICKLY?!
AREN'T YOU THE WAITRESS FROM THE DINING HALL?
YOU --!

STAY BACK! SHE'S ACTING STRANGE-LY!!
YOU LITTLE --!

TACKLE
OOOF!

WOBBLE
WHAT ARE YOU... DOING HERE...?
HUFF
HUFF
ANSWER... ME...

YOU'RE... JUST LIKE THEM...
SHE SEEMS DISORI-ENTED...
LEAP
YOU WERE... LOOKING AT ASH... TOO...
BUT SHE'S IDENTIFIED ME! I HAVE TO TAKE HER DOWN NOW!
BUT THAT'S NO USE IF YOU CAN'T HIT ME!
.....!!
I'LL TRAMPLE YOU TO A PULP!
VSSH
LUNGE
SO YOU HAVE THE STRENGTH OF A DRAGON...

!!
YOU--! JUST... JUST HOLD STILL!
FWSSH
THUD
SKIID
NGH!
WHAT ?!
SHE'S STILL STANDING ?!

WHY, YOU ...!
RAUURRR
.....!
.....
SINCE YOU ASKED EARLIER, LET ME ANSWER YOUR QUESTION, YOUNG DRAGON.
THIS IS MY MISSION.
THERE'S SOMEONE I RESPECT AND CARE FOR DEARLY.
I CAN ONLY SERVE HIM WHOLE-HEARTEDLY.
KRNCH
SO FOR HIM...
I WILL NOT FEAR ANY DRAGON!
.....!

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR SUCH STUPID THINGS!
THAT'S ALL NONSENSE! "RESPECT"? "CARE FOR DEARLY"? "SERVE HIM WHOLE-HEARTEDLY"?!
YOU'RE NOTHING BUT HIS HOUND!!
I WANT A REAL CONNECTION! I WANT TO BE RIGHT BY HIS SIDE!!

I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU, DRAGON. PART OF YOU WAS BORN A WOMAN...
FWIP
CLINK
SO YOU'VE HAD TO ENDURE ALL THIS EXTRA PAIN.
BUT WE'RE NOTHING ALIKE. IF *WE* DESIRES IT...
THEN...

I'LL GLADLY SERVE AS HIS HOUND.
ASH ...!
BAAANG

I'LL GLADLY SERVE AS HIS HOUND.

B A A A N G
ASH ...!

HUH ?!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SHE LEFT?!
APPARENTLY, SHE SUDDENLY RUSHED OUT. SHE SEEMED DISTRESSED.
ONE OF THE PALACE MAIDS FOLLOWED HER, BUT...
I SEE.
WHAT NOW ...?
THE PRINCESS ISN'T BACK YET, AND IN ORDER TO SEARCH FOR ECO...
WAIT! OF COURSE.

IF I USE MY STAR MARK...
DUCK
IT SHOULD TELL ME EXACTLY WHERE SHE IS! JUST LIKE LAST TIME!!
I BEG YOU!! SHOW ME WHERE ECO IS!!
FLIT
!
HUH ?!
FINNLE
THE BUTTER-FLIES...!

AND MY STAR MARK'S COOLING DOWN TOO!
FINNLE
IS IT POSSIBLE...
THAT THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ME AND ECO...
HAS BEEN BROKEN SOMEHOW ?!

DRAGONAR
ACADEMY

星刻の竜騎士

AM I... DEAD?
BUBBLE
IT... HURTS...
A HUGE MASS OF MAGIC...
SOME-THING'S COMING TOWARD ME.
BOOM

NOOOOOOO!
BUBBLE
ゴボボ
ECO ...?
DAMMIT, I STILL CAN'T REACH HER!

I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M HERE...
INSTEAD OF OUT DOING SOMETHING --!
Chapter XXIX
The Masquerade Ball

AS WE DISCUSSED EARLIER, ASH...
IT MAKES FAR MORE SENSE FOR THE PALACE FOLK TO SEARCH FOR THEM, SINCE YOUR STAR MARK ISN'T HELPING.
YEAH, I KNOW.
BUT STILL, BEING AT A DANCE RIGHT NOW IS JUST SO...SO...
PRIM AND I ARE FAMILY. YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO FEELS A TREMENDOUS RESPONSIBILITY RIGHT NOW.
BUT THAT'S WHY I MUST ASK YOU TO ESCORT THE PRINCESS.
TAP
WHAT'S THE MATTER, YOU TWO?
ESCORT HER?

!
THTHMP
PRIN-CESS ...?
A BLUE BUTTERFLY MASK...
HER HAIR ALL BOUND UP IN A CRIMSON RIBBON...
HER DRESS FLOWING AROUND HER LIKE PETALS...!
YOU BOTH LOOK POSITIVELY GLUM.

!
BLUSH
OH! A-ALTHOUGH COSETTE DID FILL ME IN...
AH!
ABOUT ECO AND PRIM GOING MISSING.
WHAT?! HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE --?
YEAH, AND THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE, TOO-- MY STAR MARK'S NOT RESPONDING AT ALL.
PARDON ME...
LOVELIEST YOUNG LADY.
MIGHT I PLEASE GET BY?

OH! I'M TERRIBLY SORRY.
THANK YOU KINDLY. NOW THEN, SHALL WE?
SWSSH
YOU --!
GRAB
MIL-GAUSS !!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
UNHAND ME, ASH BLAKE.
WE HAVE NOTHING TO SAY TO EACH OTHER RIGHT NOW.

HAS MY ATTENDANT ERRED IN SOME WAY?
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME!
AFTER EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE--!
THAT BASTARD ...!
I RECOG-NIZE... THAT NOBLE-MAN.
NO, IT'S NOTHING.
YANK
HE MISTOOK ME FOR SOMEONE ELSE.
YOU DO?
THAT'S COUNT KLAUS OF THE VANDERHAAR BORDERS.

SO HE'S --!
LOOKS LIKE IT'S STARTING.
LET'S GO.
MINGLE
MINGLE
UM...

YOU MUST BE PRETTY USED TO PARTIES LIKE THIS, HUH, PRINCESS?
HM? NO, NOT REALLY.
THE KNIGHTDOM PLACES A HIGHER VALUE ON *SIMPLICITY* THAN ON THIS SORT OF THING.
AND MORE IMPORTANTLY...
YOU CAN'T ADDRESS ME THAT WAY HERE.

HUH?
IF YOU KEEP CALLING ME "PRINCESS," WHAT'S THE POINT OF ME WEARING THIS MASK?
OH, UH... WHAT... WHAT SHOULD I CALL YOU, THEN?
OBVIOUSLY YOU SHOULD CALL ME...
PRINCESS...?
FRET FRET
UM... I MEAN ...!
C-CALL ME...
BLUSH
SYL...

UH....!
S... S... SYL...!
GIVE IT A TRY!
S...
SYLVIE... WHISPER
H-HUH?!
ACK! A-ALL RIGHT.
SHOVE
GAH!
BEAUTIFUL MADEMOI-SELLE!! WOULD YOU DO ME THE HONOR OF A DANCE?!
MUTTER
MUTTER
WAIT!!
I WAS FIRST!!
ER... I-I REALLY...
HOW DARE YOU TRY TO BARGE IN!! MILADY, DANCE WITH ME INSTEAD!!
YOUR FACE MAY BE HIDDEN, BUT YOUR BEARING CLEARLY MARKS YOU AS A NOBLE YOUNG WOMAN!

"SHE HIDES IT WELL, BUT HER HIGHNESS IS QUITE SHY AROUND STRANGERS."
.....!

PRIN-CESS...
SHE SEEMS TO BE AT A LOSS.

PRIN-CESS!
LUNGE
DAMMIT!

I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, BUT...
I CONFESS I'M NOT IN THE MOOD TO DANCE RIGHT NOW!

SWARM
SWARM
CRAP...
THERE'S JUST TOO MANY PEOPLE!

GOOD GRIEF.
HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE ESCORTING ME, AND INSTEAD HE WANDERS OFF!
HE'S SO THOUGHT-LESS!
THAT DARN ASH!
WHERE DID HE GET TO?
I SUP-POSE...
IT'S POSSIBLE THAT HE GOT TOO ANXIOUS AND WENT TO LOOK FOR ECO.
SHE'S HIS *STEED*, AFTER ALL.
WITH HER MISSING, HE MIGHT NOT FEEL UP TO DANCING.
BUT HE LOOKED SO DIS-TRESSED.

I...
WIPE
WIPE
OH, WHAT AM I THINKING ?!
BUT...
HE COULD'VE SPARED A FEW MINUTES FOR ME FIRST, COULDN'T HE...?
OH!
PRINCESS SYLVIA?
MIGHT YOU HAVE A MOMENT...
YOU'RE --!
AH, THAT WAS INDISCREET OF ME-- CALLING YOU BY NAME AT A MASQUERADE BALL. MY APOLOGIES.

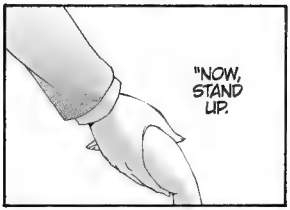
.....!
I'M NOT OPPOSED TO DANCING... AS LONG AS...
BUT I WAS HOPING YOU MIGHT GRACE ME WITH A DANCE.
OOOOH!
WELL, YOU HEARD THE LADY, MILGALISS.
HA HA HA HA!!
HEH...
YOU HAVE A MOST DISCERNING EYE, YOUR HIGHNESS!
IT'S WITH THAT GENTLEMAN THERE!

I CAN FEEL EVERY-ONE'S EYES ON US.
ARE WE THE CENTER OF ATTENTION RIGHT NOW?
THIS DANCE HAS BEEN PASSED DOWN THROUGH THE KNIGHTDOM'S ROYAL FAMILY FOR GENER-ATIONS.
WE'RE EVEN BREATHING AS ONE PERSON.
AS IF...
WE WERE SIBLINGS BORN BENEATH THE SAME STAR...!

TELL ME.
WHO ARE YOU...?
AREN'T YOU MY OLDER BROTHER, WHO I WAS TOLD DIED YEARS AGO...?
.....
.....
WHEN I WAS LITTLE...

"LISTEN, SYLVIE.
"FOR TWO PEOPLE TO SHARE A DANCE, THEY HAVE TO WORK TOGETHER.

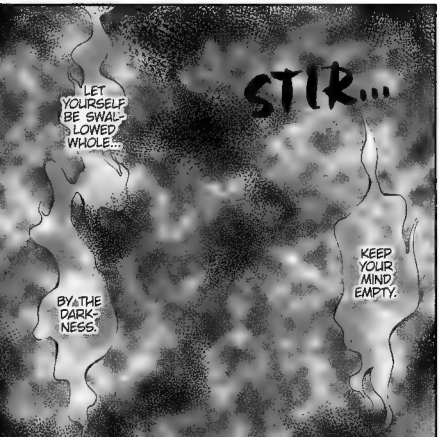
"I CAN'T!
"I CAN'T DANCE! MY FEET WON'T DO IT!"

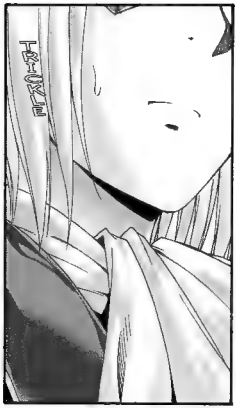

"NOW, STAND UP.

"YOU MUSTN'T THINK ONLY OF WHAT YOU'RE DOING.
"A TRUE DANCE DEMANDS PARTNERS WHO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER--- WHOSE HEARTS ARE AS ONE.

"FOR NOW, I'LL BE THE ONE HOLDING YOUR HAND.
"BUT ONE DAY, WHEN YOU'RE OLDER AND SURROUNDED BY PEOPLE.!!

"I WANT YOU TO FIND YOUR OWN PART-NER...
"AND LEARN TO DANCE BEAUTI-FULLY."
THAT'S WHAT MY BIG BROTHER TOLD ME.


STIR...
LET YOURSELF BE SWAL-LOWED WHOLE...
KEEP YOUR MIND EMPTY.
BY THE DARK-NESS.


HA-HA-HA

GASP!
.....!!
UGH --!!
OH --!
REACH
WAIT ...!!
NGH ...!!

SNAP
GAH!
YOU'RE NOT...
HERE TO SUPPORT ME ANYMORE, ARE YOU?
BIG BROTHER...

PRINCESS!!
ASH --!
OOOOH!

PRINCESS!!

ASH --!
OOOOH!

I HATE TO ADMIT IT, BUT I CAN'T DO ANYTHING FOR HER AT THE MOMENT.
AND RIGHT NOW...

I'M YOUR ESCORT, PRINCESS.

YOU-- WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
I THOUGHT YOU'D GONE LOOKING FOR ECO!

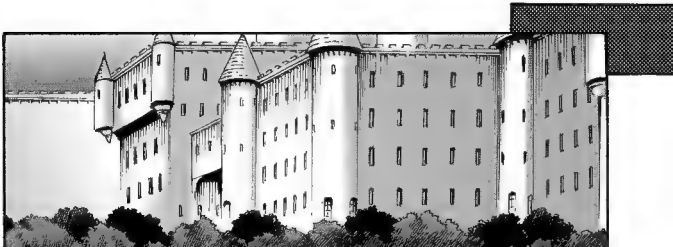
YOU THERE!
BRING ME SHOES!
PRIN-CESS?
I MEAN, I WASN'T SURE IF I SHOULD COME OVER OR NOT...
YOU WERE THE CENTER OF ATTENTION FOR A BIT.

I SEE.
WELL, OF COURSE.

LOOK AROUND.
THE MUSIC IS STILL PLAYING.
THE CROWD WANTS US TO KEEP DANCING.
I DIDN'T DO SO WELL IN DANCE LESSONS...
HUSH AND DEAL WITH IT, YOU IDIOT.
WHEN YOU FIND YOURSELF IN THE LIMELIGHT, YOU MUST ANSWER ITS CALL.
THAT'S HOW SOCIETY WORKS, ASH.
JUST FOR NOW...
I WANT YOU TO TAKE MY HANDS AND SUPPORT ME.

AS YOU WISH, PRINCESS-- ER...!

SYLVIE, REMEMBER?



IMPERIAL AIRSHIP BEOWULF.
VWWWMMM

ゴウーン
KATUNK
ゴウーン
KATUNK
THE TENTH CHARGE HAS BEEN SUCCESS-FULLY FIRED.
NO VISIBLE CHANGES IN SPECIMEN ALPHA. ITS BODY IS STILL RESISTING MAGICAL INPUT.
UNAC-CEPTABLE. PREPARE ANOTHER CHARGE.
……
ブリボボボ…
BURBLE

ELEVENTH CHARGE LOADED, SIR.
FIRE.
WEEEEE
FLASH!!
BOOM

BAM

ARRUARR

BUBBLE

ASH...

星刻の竜騎士

ALL RIGHT, PRIM.
CAN YOU TELL US EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE AND DURING ECO'S KIDNAPPING?
Chapter XXX
The Time of Awakening
I'LL TRY.
WHY'D YOU AND ECO GO OUT TO THE GARDEN IN THE FIRST PLACE?
BUT TO BE HONEST, I'M STILL TRYING TO FIGURE IT OUT.
WE WERE CHATTING WHILE SHE GOT DRESSED, AND THEN SHE TOOK OFF!

I WAS TRYING TO CHEER HER UP.
LET ME SEE...
AND WHAT WERE YOU CHATTING ABOUT?
WELL... IT SEEMED TO ME THAT SHE WAS ANXIOUS ABOUT HER PLACE AS ASH'S STEED, SO...
I SAID SOMETHING ABOUT HOW EVEN IF ASH GOT MARRIED AND HAD A CHILD SOMEDAY...
SHE'D ALWAYS HAVE THE SAME SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.
YOU--! WHY WOULD YOU DISCUSS A THING LIKE THAT WITH HER?!
WH...
WHAT ...?!

AND SHE STILL DOESN'T KNOW WHY SHE WAS BORN SO DIFFERENT FROM OTHER DRAGONS!
.....
SO IT'S NATURAL THAT SHE'S INSECURE AND TURNING TO HER MASTER FOR SUPPORT!
YOU FOOL!!
YES, SHE'S A DRAGON, BUT INSIDE SHE'S JUST LIKE ANY OTHER GIRL!!
IF I WERE IN HER PLACE, THEN...
CLENCH
I WOULD'VE FELT HURT TOO!
IT'S OKAY, PRINCESS. THANKS.
NNHH! I... I...!
YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG, PRIM. YOU JUST DON'T KNOW ECO THE WAY WE DO.

I KEEP THINKING OF ECO AS ANOTHER WOMAN.
BUT EVEN I HAVE TO ADMIT IT'S RATHER STRANGE.
I THINK I WENT TOO FAR THERE.
Phew.
YOU'RE RIGHT. FORGIVE ME.
YOU DO?!
AND I ALSO WANT TO THANK YOU, PRIM.
Sniffle...
I REALLY APPRECIATE THAT YOU TRIED SO HARD TO BE CONSIDERATE OF HER FEELINGS AS A DRAGON.
ECO'S MY BELOVED STEED.
AT FIRST, I DIDN'T...
BUT AS I WATCHED THOSE TWO GET CLOSER AND CLOSER...

AAASH...!
Waaah!
HA HA...
THE IMPORTANT THING IS, WHAT ABOUT HER ATTACKERS?!
TELL ME EVERY DETAIL YOU CAN REMEMBER!!
MAYBE THEY WERE FROM THE TANTAROS TRIBE...?
AND THE GIRL WHO ATTACKED ME WAS A TINY LITTLE THING.
WELL... THEY WERE DRESSED LIKE SERVANTS, BUT THERE WAS AN AIR OF UNEASINESS-- LIKE THEY WERE OUT OF PLACE.
UM... THEIR SKIN WAS A BIT DARK...
THE TANTAROS TRIBE...
A PETITE GIRL...
!!

I'M GONNA GO QUESTION HIM!!
WAIT!!

IT MUST'VE BEEN THAT GIRL WHO WAS WITH MILGAUSS!!
SO HE IS THE ONE BEHIND THIS!!!

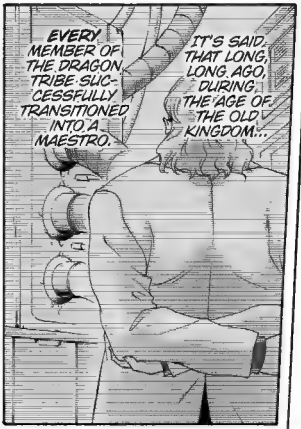
YOU'VE GOT TO TURN THE TABLES ON HIM, ASH.
BUT --!
RIGHT NOW, HE'S AT THE BALL-- SO HE WON'T BE ABLE TO TAKE ACTION!

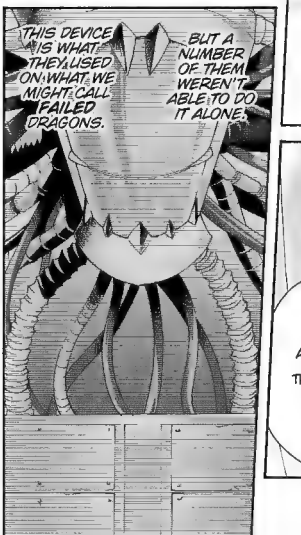
EVEN IF YOU PRESS HIM FOR INFORMATION, HE'S NOT GOING TO CONFESS TO ANYTHING IN PUBLIC.
AND IF THINGS WENT BADLY, IT COULD HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE CONFERENCE!

SINCE YOUR STAR MARK ISN'T REACTING TO HER, I HAVE TO THINK THAT SHE'S BEEN LOCKED AWAY IN SOME SORT OF SEALED LOCATION.
EXCEPT WE STILL DON'T KNOW WHERE SHE IS.
YOU'RE RIGHT!
WE CAN RESCUE ECO WHILE HE'S OCCUPIED!!
NOT TO MENTION THAT THEY'D NEED QUITE A FACILITY TO HOLD HER! THAT'D TAKE TIME TO PREPARE.
HOW COULD THEY HAVE ACCESS TO A PLACE LIKE THAT?
BUT THIS ISN'T IMPERIAL TERRITORY..
THAT'S IT!!
THE ONLY PLACE THAT MEETS THAT DESCRIPTION IS...
WAIT...
WHAT IF THEY TOOK HER SOMEPLACE THEY PREPARED BEFORE COMING HERE?

THE IMPERIAL AIRSHIP BEOWULF !!
FSSSSSSSW
WHEW...

I COULDN'T BEAR TO WATCH THAT NIGHTMARE A MOMENT LONGER.
FSSSSH
IT WAS HORRIFIC!
THEY KEPT SHOOTING COMPRESSED MAGIC CHARGES INTO ECO, ROUND AFTER ROUND.
AND EVEN NOW, THEY'RE STILL DOING IT!
WORSE, THEY'RE CALLING ECO "ALPHA"...
AND COMPLETELY DEHUMANIZING HER-- NO NAME, NO RIGHTS...


EVERY MEMBER OF THE DRAGON TRIBE SUCCESSFULLY TRANSITIONED INTO A MAESTRO.
IT'S SAID THAT LONG, LONG AGO, DURING THE AGE OF THE OLD KINGDOM...


THIS DEVICE IS WHAT THEY USED ON WHAT WE MIGHT CALL FAILED DRAGONS.
BUT A NUMBER OF THEM WEREN'T ABLE TO DO IT ALONE.

I SUPPOSE DEHUMANIZING HER MAKES IT EASIER FOR THEM TO DO THAT TO HER.

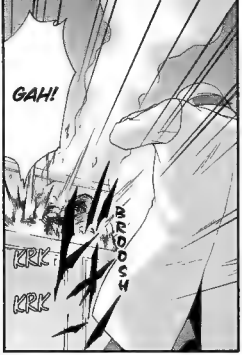
TWIST
BUT...
WHO WOULD'VE IMAGINED THERE'S A DEVICE OUT THERE TO HURRY DRAGONS' AWAKENING ALONG?

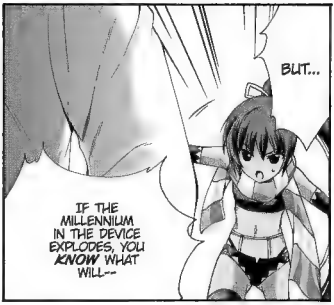
"FAILED," HUH?
DRIP
SO THEY SEE HER AS A FAILURE AND THINK THEY CAN DO ANYTHING THEY PLEASE TO HER?
THE POWER OF THE MILLENNIUM IS DANGEROUS...!
ONE SLIPUP COULD EASILY OBLITERATE A CITY!
BUT THEY'VE TAKEN SOMETHING WITH ALL THAT MAGICAL STRENGTH...
AND ARE PUMPING IT INTO ONE GIRL.

KA-BOOM!
P-PROFESSOR HOFFMAN!!
VMMMM
WHAT HAPPENED?!
ANYA...
SOME-THING TERRIBLE ...!

I CAN'T MAKE SENSE OF...
ANY OF THE READINGS!
RMBL
RMBL
RMBL
RMBL
RMBL
THE STRANGE MAGICAL EFFECT HAS INCREASED! STILL RISING!!
THE YGG-DRASIL IS OUT OF CONTROL!!
IT'S NOT ACCEPTING THE EMER-GENCY STOP SIGNAL!!

RMBL
RMBL
RMBL
NO!
IT'S TOO DANGEROUS IN HERE, PROFESSOR! YOU NEED TO LEAVE AND GET TO SAFETY! NOW!!


GAH!
KRK
KRK
BROOSH


BUT...
IF THE MILLENNIUM IN THE DEVICE EXPLODES, YOU KNOW WHAT WILL--

I HAVE TO COMPLETE THE EXPERIMENT!
THAT'S MY ROLE!

NO.
THAT, AT LEAST, ISN'T A RISK ANYMORE.
HUH ?!

THE VAST ENERGY STORED WITHIN THE MILLENNIUM...
BEEP
HAS BEEN DEPLETED.
WHAT ?!
IT'S BEEN FULLY ABSORBED...
INTO THE SPECIMEN'S BODY.
NO, THAT'S IMPOS-SIBLE !!!
YES, SHE'S A DRAGON, BUT...
CRACK
KA-BRISH
SURELY SHE CAN'T PHYSICALLY CONTAIN ENERGY LIKE THAT!!!

BUT THAT'S LUDICROUS --!

BUT THAT'S LUDICROUS --!

ASH...
THERE'S SOMETHING HAPPENING ABOARD THE BEOWULF.
DO YOU THINK MAYBE A FIRE BROKE OUT?
AAUGH!!
THROB
CLUTCH
WHAT IS IT?!!
MY STAR MARK!
THROB
THROB
IT'S... SO HOT...!!

THAT'S NOT SUNLIGHT --!
SO COLD...
ECO ...?!
ASH...
THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE SKY...
?!
DID YOUR CONNEC-TION TO ECO COME BACK?!

IT'S LIKE GIANT A EGG...!
WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?!
WHAT'S THE MATTER?!
E-ECO...
ECO... IS...

IT'S LIKE GIANT A EGG...!
WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?!
WHAT'S THE MATTER ?!
E-ECO...
ECO... IS...

ARE YOU SAYING SHE'S INSIDE IT?!
WH-WHAT?! DO YOU MEAN THAT EGG-COCOON THING?!

THERE!
SHE'S UP THERE ...!!

Wobble...
PRIN-CESS... PLEASE...
CAN YOU GET ME UP THERE?

YES, FINE!
LANCELOT, WE'VE GOT TO DO THIS!

.....
L-LANCE-LOT...?

PRIN-
CESS...
LOOK
...!!
DON'T
YOU
HEAR ME,
LANCELOT
?!
WHAT
ARE
YOU
DOING
?!
THE
SKY'S
FULL OF
DRAGONS
--!
BUT
NONE
OF THEM
HAVE
RIDERS...
WHAT
THE HECK
IS GOING
ON?!
AND
THEY'RE
ALL MAE-
STROS!!

AND... I CAN KIND OF SENSE IT.
IT'S LIKE THAT OTHER TIME.
FLAP
DO YOU THINK LANCELOT IS--?
IT SURE LOOKS THAT WAY.
SO THEY'RE GATHERING AROUND HER.
THEY WANT TO SERVE ECO...

GLENN!
YOU CAN'T CONTACT YOUR STEED EITHER?!
NO.
NOR CAN I SUMMON MY ARK.
IT SEEMS AS THOUGH ALL OF THE MAESTRO DRAGONS...
ARE ASSEMBLING AROUND THAT OBJECT HOVERING OVER THE CITY.
HMPH.
SO THE PROUD ORDER OF LAUTREAMONT'S HOLY DRAGON KNIGHTS IS IN LITTER DISARRAY.
IF THE EMPIRE WERE TO ATTACK RIGHT NOW...

ドクン
TH-THMP
ドクン
TH-THMP
COME SAVE ME.
I CAN HEAR A HEART-BEAT!
IS IT COMING FROM THAT THING IN THE SKY?
ECO...!
ASH...
I'M NOTHING WITHOUT YOU.

YOU...
I...
IT CAN'T BE!
CRAAACK
CRACK...

ECO...?
I'D STARTED THINKING OF ECO AS HUMAN.
IS... IS THAT YOU...?

BUT THAT CREATURE IS SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY.
THAT'S...
RRRRUUUUUURRR

RRR
RRR
RRR
A MONSTER.
to be continued.

DRAGONAR
ACADEMY

AFTERWORD

It's me, RAN! Now that Eco's Awakening Arc has begun, we're approaching one of Dragonar's most exciting parts!

And we've got our first (brief!) look at Eco as a dragon, so from now on, drawing this manga will be a much bigger challenge for me. *laughs*

I promise I won't lose heart, and I'll keep doing my absolute best! It'd make me so happy if you all kept supporting and encouraging me.

See you in the next volume!

Eco may be a dragon, but here... she's wearing dragon-like armor!

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See you in the next volume!

TOMB RAIDERS

In the capital city of Fontaine, at the mausoleum where the royal family's dragons are laid to rest, several tombs have been robbed. Among them, the remains of the dragon belonging to Sylvia's brother are missing! When Milgauss arrives in the city to attend a conference and masquerade ball, it portends dark things for Ash, his friends, and everyone around them.

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